HOME READING.

Home Song of the American Producer.

[illegible] the bending sky
[illegible] freeman hung,
[illegible] beams of the sun on high,
[illegible] of the free is sung:
[illegible] the sky o'er a land like ours
[illegible] with its arch of blue,
[illegible] in its crystal showers,
[illegible] the glad earth with dew.

[illegible] the land where a tyrant strong
[illegible] with his iron heel,
[illegible] where the shouting, working throng
[illegible] a sounding peal;
[illegible] strong man looks to his Maker, GOD,
[illegible] face on his bended knee,
[illegible] his blade in the uncursed sod,
[illegible] Heaven that he is free.

Bright is the land where the golden grain
[illegible] over the fertile fields,
[illegible] tall rise corn on the spreading plain
[illegible] harvest of bounties yields;
[illegible] sounding flail, as it swings in air,
[illegible] fast on the threshing-floor,
[illegible] autumn sun shows the toilers there
[illegible] the gold dust covered o'er.

Give out, from the threads of the busy loom,
A story of meaning high,
While the workers throng the lighted room,
And in labor proudly vie.
Give out, by the hands of the maidens fair,
As they sing mid the shuttle's sound,
The fabrics of home-made cloth to wear,
As fine as were ever found!

Let the hammer vast on the anvil ring,
As it moulds the massive shaft,
And the workers bold all their forces bring
By the skill of their handicraft,
Let the iron ring! Let the hammer groan!
Let the labor harp be strung!
While the mighty tone of that string alone
With its joy around is rung.

Stoke the flames in the furnace fire,
In the smoky, blazing forge,
Let the red flames leap in their earnest higher,
Here in the pit the toilers gorge;
Fan the blast of the bellows vast,
Melt the ore with its fiery breath
Till molten sea is resolved at last,
Hiss a crater filled with death.

Down in the deep and gloomy mine,
And bring out your treasures thence;
Let the richest ores in their beauty shine,
Full bounties of Providence;
Be given for use by the freeman's hand,
In the glorious arts of Peace,
His voice shall cry in each older land
That the despot's power shall cease.

Leave not in the earth, or the mountain side,
The wealth which is freely given:
Go, sharpen your drills, and your task abide,
Till the solid rock is riven.
There is gold in that mass of iron ore!
There is gold in that glittering pile!
Which freemen may win from the ample store,
And sing of their joys the while.

The iron horse send with his heart of fire,
And the lightning speed he hath,
While his feet in their ardor never tire,
Rotating upon his path;
Heap up the burden vast and high!
For a wondrous steed is he,
In the mighty strength of his forge cast thigh,
And the might of his pliant knee!

Let the broad land wake in its proudest bloom,
In the light of our broader skies!
Let the Anvil, Plough, and busy Loom,
In their power and grandeur rise;
Let the workers all, in their well paid toil,
Rejoice with a labor song,
And the blessing of GOD on the uncursed soil
Be sought by the trusting throng.

Let the yeoman sing as he tills the land,
And follows the shining plough!
Let the toiler sing, as he lifts his hand,
Off wiping his sweating brow!
Let the maiden sing! Let the Anvil ring!
And the radiant truth be told—
That the labor of home, in its fruits, shall bring
A truer wealth than Gold!

Then, give me the blue of the bending sky,
O'er the land of the freeman hung,
And the bright, full beams of the sun on high,
While the hymn of the free is sung:
Oh, ne'er has the sky o'er a land like ours,
Bent down with its arch of blue,
Or joyfully wept in its crystal showers,
Or gemmed the glad earth with dew!

—*William Oland Bourne.*

A Shot at Twelve Paces.

Concluded.

Before I had finished the peg, O'Flaherty's friend made his appearance. He was unknown to me. We both bowed.

"Mr. Morley, I believe."

"Upon my life, another Irishman; and my hopes of a peaceable termination to the affair took flight at the very sound of his voice.

"Allow me to introduce meself,—Lieutenant Doolan, —th Regiment. I come from Mr. O'Flaherty."

"O yes," said I, affecting to have been momentarily forgetful of that little matter. "Very happy to make your acquaintance, though I wish it had been under pleasanter conditions."

"Not at all," said Mr. Doolan, in a tone of the most perfect contentment; "not at all. It's not meself that's going to quarrel with the conditions."

"This might be only politeness towards me, but I thought it sounded much more like satisfaction at his mission.

"Mr. O'Flaherty has, no doubt, instructed you fully as to how the matter between himself and Mr. O'Dowd stands."

"Quite so, quite so," said the lieutenant.

"Then I feel certain, Mr. Doolan, that you must agree with me that this affair can not be allowed to proceed."

Doolan simply stared.

"You can scarcely avoid feeling," I continued, "that the cause of trouble is too slight for us to permit our friends to peril their lives about such a trifle."

"Thrifle!" ejaculated Doolan.

"Now can't we hit upon some method for bringing to a peaceable issue a business which, if proceeded with to the end at present proposed, must, as I'm sure you perceive, bring nothing but ridicule upon all engaged in it."

"Faith, then," said Mr. Doolan, warmly, "I perceive nothing of the kind. Hark ye, Mr. Morley, I came here to arrange peace and the time and place for this meeting, and not to dispute about the rights and wrongs of the matter, or to question the good sense which no doubt injuiced both the gentlemen to take the fair and honorable course which they have taken. May I beg, sir, that you will enter, as soon as you conveniently can, upon the rale business for which I am here."

There was nothing for it but to pocket the olive, and do as the lieutenant wished. Time and place were agreed upon, and Doolan rose to take his leave. As we were shaking hands in the most friendly manner, I said, "By the way, Mr. Doolan, I must not forget to tell you that I have nothing at all in the shape of a duelling pistol; perhaps you are better provided."

"Make yourself perfectly aisy about that, Mr Morley," said Doolan, who would no more have been without hair-triggers than hair brushes. "I never travel without the pacemakers. *Au revoir.*" And Mr. Doolan took his departure, after receiving my assurance that I would call upon the surgeon, and make sure of his attendance upon the ground.

I cheerfully undertook to do this, as I was determined that, at any rate, the surgeon should not be an Irishman, and I had some hopes that he might be able to suggest some way out of the difficulty. Accordingly, after writing a couple of lines to O'Dowd, to say that I had arranged everything, and to inform him of the time and place, I set off at once to look up the surgeon. His name was Hale, a thoroughly scientific man, devoted to his profession, and as little likely as anybody to have any sympathy with the romantic folly of the duel. I found him at home, in remarkably good spirits as doctors generally are, and engaged upon a paper for the *Lancet*, upon the subject of gunshot wounds.

"How are you, Hale?" said I.

"How do, Morley?" said he. "What's the matter? Anything wrong with you? You look rather out of sorts. Digestion wrong, or what is it?"

"O there's nothing the matter with me," I said; "don't flatter yourself. I want your help, certainly, but not for myself. You'll be wanted about half past five this afternoon at—"

"Eh!" said Hale. You don't mean to say that Mrs.—"

"No, no," said I, "nothing of the kind,—quite the reverse, indeed. No, the state of the case is this: O'Dowd has taken umbrage at something O'Flaherty has said, and has insisted upon calling him out."

"Ah, that's it, is it?" said Hale, his eyes brightening; "and you'll want me upon the ground in case of accident. Certainly, with all my heart. Pistols, of course,"—with a glance at his manuscript,—"nothing like pistols. You may depend upon me, Morley. You may be quite certain that I shall be there."

The villain was evidently in want of an illustration to prove some confounded theory of his own with regard to bullet wounds. His glance at the manuscript betrayed him.

"No, but look here, Hale," I said, "the affair ought not to be allowed to go on."

"You think not," said he, as if entertaining the very gravest doubt as to the wisdom of my opinion.

"Certainly, I think not; and you'll think so, too, when you hear the case. Last night O'Flaherty, who, when slightly screwed, charged O'Dowd with having tubercle of the lung."

"And a most insolent thing to say, too, though it's a positive fact all the same. *In vino veritas*, and no mistake. But still a man with any respect for himself can't allow his lungs to be thrown in his face in that way without taking notice of it. And so O'Dowd demands an apology or a meeting, eh?"

"Just so. He insists upon an apology, and—it's really too absurd—a declaration from O'Flaherty that the charge brought against his lungs was unfounded."

"Quite correct," said Hale, "and this declaration O'Flaherty is, of course, unable to make. His statement was a perfectly true one, and he can't unmake it without telling a falsehood. Upon my word, if you can see any way but one out of the difficulty you are cleverer than I."

"I believe you are all gone mad," I said, vexed beyond bearing. "There's not a creature who will look at the thing in a calm and reasonable manner. Why, do you realize, sir, that just for a ridiculous word from a drunken man a valuable life may be lost?"

"Ah, very sad, very sad, indeed," replied the doctor, coolly; "but it can't be helped. The matter is gone too far now to be stopped. A meeting is absolutely necessary for the honor of the parties, and,"—laying his hand casually upon the MS., and speaking in a thoughtful manner,—and may be of infinite service to the cause of—"

He broke off there, but he meant "the cause of science," I'm certain, confound him! He was devoted to his profession was Hale.

"Half past five, at Harrison's bungalow, if you please, Mr. Hale," said I, coldly, and walked out of the room, the man of science following me to the door, and assuring me, in the cheerfulest and friendliest manner, that I might depend upon him absolutely; that he would sacrifice any number of patients sooner than not be present; and that he would be certain not to forget his instruments.

I had done my best. I had called upon Common Sense to help me, but Common Sense was nowhere to be found. I had appealed to the Dread of Ridicule, but it slept, and could not be awakened. I had asked Science to lend me a hand, but Science wanted both of hers to seize her own opportunities. There was no resource now but to let the matter go on to its bitter end.

In affairs of this kind, you know, it is not etiquette for the parties to go in company to the battle-ground, as pugilists do to a prize-fight. We must go separately to what "Bell's Life" would call a likely spot, and meet there with distant politeness. As we had to drive a good way to the place pitched upon by Doolan and myself,—an open space, well known to us all, a little way into the jungle,—it was agreed that O'Flaherty and his second should go on an hour or two in advance, taking their rifles with them, in order to pass the time with any sport that might fall in their way, and that I, with my principal and the surgeon, should follow at the stated time. All of which happened as arranged. The respondent and Doolan departed early in the afternoon, designing to lunch at the rendezvous; and shortly before six the appellant, Hale and I followed, drove to the outskirts of the jungle, there left our carriage, and strolled through the trees to the place.

"Here we are," said Hale; "true to our time; but I don't see our friends." Euphonism for enemies.

"They've been here very lately," said O'Dowd, pointing to the relics of a luncheon scattered about on the grass; "and, faith, they've made mighty free with the eatables."

"The end of a feast, most decidedly," said Hale; so we are quite ready for the beginning of a fray."

"They'll make their appearance in a minute or two, no doubt," I said. "They're having a shot at something in the jungle, perhaps."

The crack of a rifle a short distance off seemed to confirm my words.

"They might have taken both rifles with them, then, I'm thinking," exclaimed O'Dowd, picking up O'Flaherty's, which lay on the grass.

We were standing about O'Dowd examining the rifle, which was loaded, and Hale the pale ale bottles, which were all discharged, when we were all surprised by seeing Doolan running towards us with every appearance of extreme terror.

"What's the matter?" we all shouted.

"Here!" he cried. "Come here. Bring the rifle. O'Flaherty's been carried off by a tiger."

"Now, Morley," said O'Dowd, "you've got your wish at last. Come along!"

And we all set off running towards Doolan, who had stopped, and was loading his rifle.

"Did ye hit him, Phil? did ye hit him?" said O'Dowd, when he reached the lieutenant.

"Hit him, is it?" said Doolan. "No, faith, I daredn't try. I fired in hopes of frightening him. Come along! He jumped on us from behind, as we were sitting on the bank there, caught poor Tim by the shoulder, and trundled off with him, niver saying a word, as if six feet two were nothing to spake of at all. Come along!' We were hurrying after him all the while. "I jumped up, picked up the rifle: 'Stop, ye thief!' I called out, 'or I'll shoot you!' He gave a wag with his tail, the baste, as much as to say, 'Shoot away, ye daren't hit me for fear of killing Tim; and, begorra, I'll make myself safe enough for the matter of that.' And at the word the cratur chucked poor Tim onto his back, as a fox does with a goose, and away he went again—come along!—safter than ever, for I could see more of O'Flaherty now than I could of him, bad luck to him! and I wished I'd shot at first. I daredn't touch the trigger for the life of me, now, you understand; so I followed till he stopped, after a bit, and lay down with Tim before him, and then I shot, not at him, for fear of killing Tim, but in the hope of frightening the brute. But sorra a bit did it frighten him; it only made him guash his teeth, and Tim was between 'em, ye'll recollect. So then I ran back for the other rifle, and met you, and—and have a care now, we can't be far off him, unless he's cloped with Tim again, which the saints forbid, for its a mighty unpleasant way of travelling."

He had not cloped with Tim. He was still lying where Doolan had left him, with his mouth so close to poor O'Flaherty's ear that he looked as if he were whispering into it. What was to be done? The very thought of firing into him across O'Flaherty made my hand shake. We all stood still for a moment or two, staring at the tiger and his victim.

"Now then, who's going to shoot?" said Doolan. "Somebody must, or faith poor Tim will be minced veal before he knows where he is. But I'll be hanged if its me that's going to do it. You're the best shot, Dennis."

"Shoot, O'Dowd," said I. "I daren't for the life of me."

"Faith, its a risky shot, for certain," said O'Dowd; "but if we stand here and do nothing, there'll be no chance for him at all. Now hark ye, gentlemen," he said, throwing up his head, and looking, tubercle or not, a thoroughly fine feilow, "you all know, I'm sure, that though I was anxious enough to shoot O'Flaherty standing opposite me at twelve paces, I'd be the last man in the world to take advantage of him now. All right,—all right. There, that's enough! Upon me sowl, then, I never thought otherwise for a moment. Look here, now. Give Morley your rifle, Phil, and you and Hale stand a trifle back. Now, Morley, my boy, I'm going to creep in a thought nearer. Keep you just behind me. I'll blaze away at him first; and I shall hit him, don't be afraid for that. If he springs right at us, cover him well and let fly. If he only jumps up, hand me your rifle, and I'll bang at him again. D'ye understand me?"

"Perfectly."

"Follow me, then."

O'Dowd stepped gently towards the tiger, and I followed his steps closely. When we were within a dozen yards of the animal, the tiger dropped O'Flaherty's arm, which it had in its mouth, and lifted its head. O'Dowd sank on to his knee instantly, looked along his barrel for one second, and fired. With the most awful yell I ever heard the tiger sprang up, gave one bound towards us, and then, before I'd time to mark him properly, rolled over on the long grass.

"Twelve feet from the nose to the tip of the tail, I'll bet a hundred," said O'Dowd, quietly.

I handed him the loaded rifle, and we all, except Doolan, who dashed recklessly over to O'Flaherty, walked cautiously towards the fallen tiger. The bullet had passed through his eye into his brain, and he was as dead as his greatest grandfather.

"Dead as a herring!" I cried.

"Begad, and so he is," said Doolan, who was bending over O'Flaherty; "and so he is. Come here, Hale, can't you. Bad luck to ye! you're a pretty doctor to stand staring a tiger, when there's a dead christian in want of your assistance five yards off. Come here, can't you."

We all ran at once to O'Flaherty.

"O Tim, Tim," whined Doolan, "whatever injuiced you to go and die in a hurry like this?"

"Die!" said Hale, sharply; what the dickens are you talking about dying for? The man's not dead. Not a bit of it. His left arm's broken, certainly, broken in two places; and he's nicely contused all over, I'll stake my reputation; pretty well frightened, no doubt; I confess I am, without so much cause; but dead! Bless my soul, sir, will you have the goodness to allow him a breath of air?"

The breath of air was allowed him. In a very short time he recovered consciousness; requested to know in a strong Irish accent whereabouts he was; betrayed by a few words that he was under the impression that he had lost his way in returning from a heavy dinner, and had gone to sleep by the roadside; then recovered his senses completely; listened to the whole history, while Hale tied his arm up as well as it could be done; and finally, with much assistance, rose to his feet.

"Well, gentlemen," said I, cheerfully, "I suppose we may return at once, for the business which we came about will scarcely be proceeded with now, I apprehend."

"I decidedly forbid Mr. O'Flaherty's proceeding with that matter to-day," said Hale, sulkily, laying strong emphasis upon the last word.

"Faith, Hale," said O'Flaherty, "ye may even forbid it altogether. I should be a more insensate brute than that tiger there if I could not apologize now without feeling any humiliation in doing so. Give us your hand, Dennis, and receive my apologies. I was screwed when I met you the other night, and—"

"You shan't say another word, Tim," said O'Dowd; "if you do, I'll never spake to ye again. Come along; let's go at once. We'll send the servants for the baste yonder."

We all returned in high spirits; and that was the first and last duel I ever had a hand in.

"By Jove! that was a fine shot of O'Dowd's," said Galton, "and, all circumstances considered, must have been immensely satisfactory to himself. Yours is the only affair of the kind, Morley, that I ever heard of, in which either of the principals obtained any real satisfaction."

"If O'Dowd was as good a hand at a pistol as a rifle, O'Flaherty's chance would have been a very poor one," said Dormer.

"Well, the tiger was the real peacemaker after all," said Bingham, "and yet he had to suffer for it. There's a want of classical justice about that part of the story.

"Nay," said Morley, "on the contrary, it is quite correct and classical. Among the ancients, you know, when two enemies were reconciled, they sacrificed a beast upon the occasion."

[Written for the Citizen.]

The Story of Craig House.

BY UNOHOO.

In the land of the Bruces, within the shadow of "Old Edinboro Castle," grim, old and grand, looming high upon

"The steep, iron-bolted rock,
Where trusted lie monarchy's last gems,
The sceptre, sword and crown that graced the brows
Since Fergus, father of a hundred kings,"

Whose walls are redolent with tales of daring and of chivalry, love, horror and despair. In the "Heart of Midlothian," immortalized by Sir Walter Scott, in his creation of the character of Jennie and Effie Deans, and where the streets once resounded to the tramp of armed warriors, and the sun glistened on the bright coats of mail of long retinues of valiant knights. In the home of the Douglass's, the Hamilton's, the Earls of Angus and of Arran, the Dukes of Albany and Sir William Stirling, of Richard Lawson of the "Highriggs," whose feats of chivalry were sung by "Lindesay of the Mount;" here where the great reformer, John Knox, and the ripe scholar, David Hume, resided, and where Gavin Douglass (who translated Virgil's *Aneid* into Scotch) once lived; here where Robert Burns, "The Ploughman," made his debut to the cultivated world as a poet; here where every old, quaint gable roof once sheltered some famous knight, bard, or scholar; here in Edinboro, and under one of the oldest and quaintest of these roofs, and in a room once graced by kings and queens the writer heard the following thrilling legend of the "Craig House."

About twenty minutes walk from Edinburgh, stands the "Craig House," an ancient and venerable castle, dating back somewhere about the year 1500. At present it forms part of the Edinburgh Lunatic Asylum, and has been so remodeled and repaired as to leave little of the original building, but sufficient has been left untouched to prove its claim to great antiquity. In 1540 it was occupied by Arthur, Earl of Craig a widower with an only daughter, whose beauty had been the theme of bards innumerable. And not only beautiful was she, but in manner irresistable, drawing all towards her and breaking the hearts of the legion of knights who came to woo her. Among these was Sir Launcelot, a Frenchman, who in 1544, came over from France at the head of six thousand French soldiers to keep in power Mary of Guise, widow of King James V, she having been appointed Regent during the minority of her infant daughter, betrothed to the Dauphin of France.

Sir Launcelot was a handsome knight, possessing that soft southern beauty and sauvity of manner peculiar to the French nobility, and he soon became a favorite with "Lady Mary," as the earl's daughter was always called. She was greatly attached to him, by far the finest gentleman she had seen, still she did not love him, being repelled by occasional glimpses of a cold, brutal, vindictive disposition, that elegance and polish could not entirely conceal. As a friend, the lady liked, perhaps admired him, but when he ventured to assume the role of a lover, she shrank from him. Perceiving this, Sir Launcelot, in the bitterness of his disappointment, vowed to conquer and humiliate her. He was too polite and cunning, however, to show his anger, and met every rebuff with a look of such meekness and patient dejection that at times very nearly excited a feeling of pity in the breast of Lady Mary. Sir Launcelot well knew that this feeling was often the stepping-stone to love, and so quietly bided his time—but there was one, even then, approaching Edinboro, destined to bear off the prize he so much coveted. This youth, scarce four and twenty, of noble lineage, as handsome a Scott as ever donned a tarlton, was famed for his strength and courage. A Douglass, whom men delighted to honor—honest, gentle and brave! He brought letters of introduction and dispatches from the Court of England to the Earl of Craig, and was pressed to make the Craig House his home during his stay. In due time he was introduced to Lady Mary. It was "the old, old story," love at first sight. From the moment of his introduction, Lady Mary could find room in her heart for no other. His stay was prolonged from a week to a month, and then to two, three, four, and finally the heralds proclaimed the glad tidings to the people that the noble houses of Douglass and Craig were to be united by the marriage of this famous knight to their Lady Mary.

And what of Sir Launcelot?

In silent wrath and envy, he spent most of his time at his quarters, meditating revenge. He was seldom seen beyond the castle gates until the day of the marriage, when he entered the chapel, and kneeling before the altar took a dreadful oath to destroy his rival, or failing, called upon God to curse him. He would have consummated his revenge at once, if possible, only being prevented by the arrival of a courrier with dispatches ordering his immediate return to France.

Six years went by, and Lady Mary had been blessed with three children—all bonny, fair-haired boys—who were the delight and pride of their parents, to whom life together had been one long dream of happiness and love.

On a bright June morning Douglass mounted his horse and rode down the hill to meet the "Council" of the city at "Dounes," a favorite resort for gentlemen of that time. At the foot of the hill he was accosted by a ragged mendicant who piteously besought alms. The servant, who accompanied the knight, rode up to drive the beggar away, but the master, whose kind heart was ever open to the appeal of distress, waved him back, and beckoning to the pauper to approach nearer, was in the act of handing him some coin, when the treacherous Launcelot, for it was he, throwing off his disguise, and uttering a fiendish yell, flung himself upon Douglass and buried the dagger to the hilt in his heart. Dragging the body from the saddle, he leaped upon the horse, confronting the terror-stricken servant, and, while pointing to the body, cried, "give that to Lady Mary with Sir Launcelot's compliments," then wheeled and fled.

Loud and bitter was the wail of grief that arose from all, as the body of the noble knight was brought into the castle and laid tenderly on a lounge. Lady Mary, attracted by the cries, entered the hall, uttering a piercing scream, flung herself upon the corpse, and pressing her cheek close to that of the dead man's, remained so quiet and motionless that her attendants, thinking she had fainted, attempted to remove her, but rising slowly, with dry eyes, and set lips, she motioned all but her children to retire, then gathering these around her, and kneeling with them before the dead body, she vowed to devote the balance of her life to cultivating a thirst for revenge in the hearts of her children, and dedicated their lives to the task of avenging the murder of their father. She was never known to smile after that day, and when the funeral was over she entered her room, and never quitted it again, alive.

The years rolled by, and Lady Mary lost no opportunity of fostering the bitter hatred they bore to Sir Launcelot. Careful too was she of their health, to a degree almost beyond reason. Masters they had in plenty—adepts in every known kind of athletic games, and in the use of every warlike weapon—but *teachers* she ignored, saying her children would not need learning. She ceased to regard the boys as her offspring. She looked upon them as beings created solely for one purpose—revenge! Her care for them arose more from an anxiety to fit them for the trial to come, than to rear them as befitted their high station. She had determined to send the first-born forth in quest of Sir Launcelot the day he became of age, and should the first fail, the second was to follow on arriving at maturity, and so on, even to the third and last. Sir Launcelot had heard of this, and once in bravado, sent Lacy Mary word, that as each of her sons reached his majority, he, Sir Launcelot would be in waiting on the Esplanade "to send the young whelp to keep his father company."

Time went by, and soon but a few days remained ere Robert, the eldest, would be of age. Daily, and most minutely and carefully was his armor inspected by the widowed mother. More and more zealous and anxious became the masters. Harder and more constant were the exercises Robert undertook. A fine specimen of savage manhood was he, and little doubt did any entertain but what he would win the victory over Sir Launcelot, now nearly sixty years of age. Still, the knight, although well on in years, had a strong frame and muscles of steel, and in many a fierce encounter had he learned to use the lance and sword with terrible effect.

The last evening came, and as the lingering light began to fade a courier rode hastily up to Craig House and delivered a message from Sir Launcelot to Lady Mary. It was to the effect that he, Sir Launcelot would be in readiness on the Esplanade at noon on the morrow. Would Robert be there to meet him? An answer was returned in the affirmative.

At last, the dreadful moment came for Robert to don his armor, and Lady Mary insisted upon having it done in her presence. Carefully did she inspect every portion, ere she gave him her blessing and dismissed him. His brothers were forbidden to accompany him, lest harm should befall them, but Robert rode to the meeting followed by a large body of knights and gentlemen. Arriving, they found Sir Launcelot and his large retinue awaiting them. All preliminaries were quickly arranged. The herald sounded the charge, the horses leaped to the encounter, and with lowered lances their riders met half way, with a shock that landed both flat in their saddles. Robert's lance then broke, enabling Sir Launcelot to right himself. He quickly perceived that the point of his weapon had caught and started a plate directly over Robert's heart. With the smile of a very demon, he threw his weight upon the lance, the rivet in the plate gave way, and Robert dropped from his horse, pierced to the heart!

Again the sound of lamentation was heard in the Craig House, yet the stricken mother neither wept nor spoke, as they brought the body of her first born home.

Two more years passed, silvering the hair and bending the stately form of Lady Mary, and then George, the second son, rode forth to meet Sir Launcelot, now, as before, in readiness. This time the mother had spared no money on her son's accoutrements. Skillful men from London, Paris and Edinburgh had for months been laboring upon it, and every knight who inspected the armor declared it to be the finest work he ever saw. George was, if anything, a taller and stronger man than was Robert, though of slighter build. By many he was thought to hold a steadier and better lance than his brother.

For a second time Sir Launcelot found his weapon couched against a son of his former rival, but he felt no fear. Though his curly locks were whitening fast, he was still hale and hearty, and his muscles as firm and his arm as strong as ever.

The bugle sounds. Both lower their lances and charge with the utmost fury. The meeting was terrific. Both men were unhorsed. The boy's lance had struck Sir Launcelot full in the breast, dashing him from his horse, senseless. Sir Launcelot had aimed for George's throat, and the point of the lance struck the vizor under the chin, hurling the boy to the ground and breaking his neck instantly.

The sound of woe again resounded through the Craig household; yet still, the grief-stricken mother neither wept nor spoke as her second son was laid to rest.

Two years more passed quickly, and the widow's once fair tresses were white as snow, her form bent, and her step feeble and slow. Rarely was she able now to leave her bed, and as the time drew near for the third and last sacrifice, she sank rapidly.

Everything that could be was done to send Harry to the encounter accoutred in a faultless manner. From far and near the most skilful artisans had come, to construct his suit of mail. An unheard-of price had been given for his noble charger. His lance was a marvel of perfect workmanship, and his sword was said to be of true Damascus steel.

As Harry mounted his horse and rode away, followed by a vast concourse of knights and gentlemen, the whole house hold dropped upon their knees in prayer for his safety. On the field waited Sir Launcelot, with his vizor up, looking older and much broken, and as Harry reached the esplanade he rode up to the boy and saluted him courteously. All present were taken by surprise at this civility on his part, and waited with bated breath for what should follow.

"I am aware, sir," said Sir Launcelot, "that you are the heir, and last of the line of the House of Craig. I am also aware that your mother, the worthy Lady Mary, has devoted you to the task of avenging the death of your father, and that both of you hold me accountable as his murderer—which, God forgive me, I am. I gave my word to meet your brothers, and yourself if necessary, as each should come of age. I have kept my word, so far, and am ready to go still further should you insist upon it, but, for your own sake, I ask you to pause and consider well before you decide to test the temper of my steel."

Here his voice faltered for a moment, but recovering himself, he continued:

"Looking back over the past, I can now find ample cause for regret that I killed your father. The feeling that prompted me to the act has long since died in my breast, and could I, by sacrificing my own, restore his life, most willingly would I do so."

He paused, seemingly overcome by emotions he could not control, and then said, hurriedly and nervously:

"Fain would I spare thee, boy, and heartily do I wish to see you become a fitting successor to a noble father. I therefore ask thee to take council with thy friends that they may bid thee give me permission to retire."

Without a moment's hesitation, Harry replied:

"I came to avenge my father. I can hold no parley with his murderer."

Dark grew the face of Sir Launcelot and fierce was the gleam of his eye, as he answered:

"Thy blood, then, be upon thine own head;" and dropping his vizor, rode off to his own position.

For a few moments there was a death like stillness; then the bugle sounded and the steeds came thundering on to the charge. Sir Launcelot's lance struck Harry full in the breast and was shivered to atoms. Harry's lance struck his opponent in the shoulder, making him reel in his saddle, but neither were injured. Sir Launcelot having received another weapon, the bugle sounded again and a second time they charged. Both lances were broken, and the knight was unseated and thrown to the ground. Quickly recovering himself, he drew his sword, and Harry, dismounting, drew also, and advanced to the encounter. Fast and furious were the blows dealt by the boy, and dexterously parried by Sir Launcelot. Faster and more furious grew the onslaught, and it soon became plain to all that the knight was growing weary. When Harry perceived it, he became excited and incautious. Aiming a terrific blow at Sir Launcelot, he stumbled, and the knight, evading the stroke, summoned all his remaining strength and sent his blade crashing through the boy, helmet and skull, and Harry dropped—a corpse!

Again the sound of woe penetrated to the bedside of poor Lady Mary. Slowly raising in her bed, with clenched hands and protruding eyes, she shrieked: "Lost! Lost!" and fell back—dead.

The Work of a Single Hair.

In the base of the Capitol at Washington is the enginery by which the House, the Senate and the committee rooms are warmed and ventilated, and the gas lighted by electricity.

It is altogether a big apparatus, consisting of three immense fans, four engines and eight boilers, with the necessary appliance for regulating the temperature and moisture of the air supplied to the nation's legislators.

The instrument which tells whether the air is too moist or too dry is operated by a single human hair. A perfectly dry air is put at 0; saturated air, that is air carrying all the moisture it will hold, is put at 100.

A dial with a hand like that of a clock represents the different degrees from 0 to 100. The human hair absorbs moisture like a rope, and like a rope it becomes shorter when wet. The difference in length between a hair six inches long when wet and the same hair when dry is made to represent the hundred degrees of moisture on the dial, and the hand or pointer moves backward or forward as the moisture in the air varies. If it becomes too dry, more steam is thrown in; if too moist, less steam is allowed to escape, and thus the atmosphere for the nation's statesmen is regulated and kept at the healthful point, which is about 50 degrees.

Sam Kalleton, a member of the Arkansas Legislature, was very fond of offering amendments to bills introduced. That was the limit of his legislative capacity. One morning after a night's hilarity, he entered the legislative hall just as the Chaplain was asking Divine aid. The old man took a chew of tobacco and listened attentively until the Chaplain closed his petition with an effective recitation of the Lord's Prayer. "Mr. Speaker," said the old man, arising, "I move to strike out the words 'daily bread,' and insert 'as much bread as may be found necessary for twenty days. We have already done enough for the flood sufferers."

A little four-year-old said to his mother last week: "Mother, I believe God thinks I am dead." "Why?" asked the mother, somewhat astonished at the remark. "'Cause I haven't said my prayers for a week."

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